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Payne named 17th President

Acting Haverford President to arrive in July

by Elizabeth Coombe

Harry C. Payne was today elected 17th President of Hamilton College. The announcement was made by Chairman of the Board William M. Bristol, III, concluding an intensive nationwide search for a new president that extended over more than six months.

Payne, who is currently Provost and Acting President of Haverford College, was chosen from among 316 applicants by a search committee chaired by trustee James T. Rhind, and consisting of students and faculty members as well as other trustees. Payne will assume office on July 1, 1988, as successor to J. Martin Carovano, who has been President since 1974.

A historian and widely recognized specialist in the 18th century, Payne was graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Yale University in 1969 and remained on at Yale to earn his Ph.D. degree in 1973.

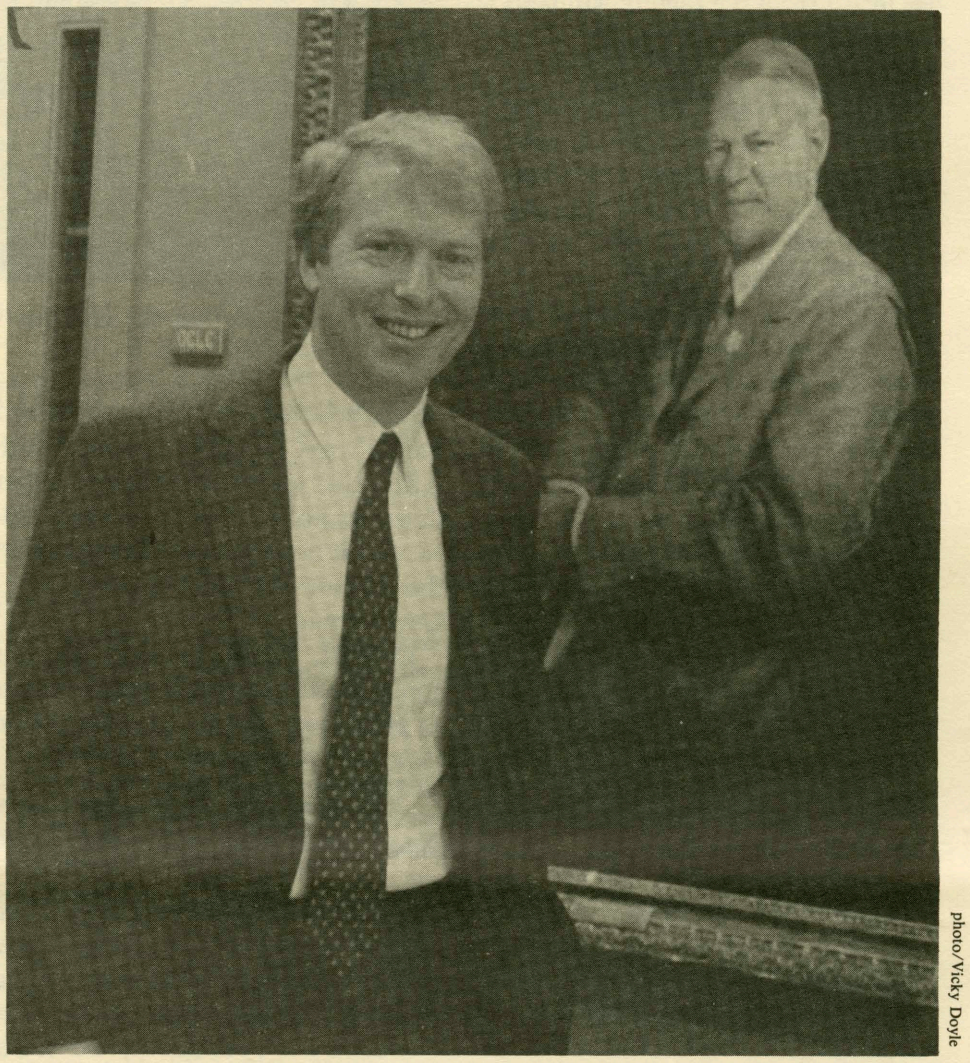
He was appointed as an instructor in history at Colgate University in 1973. In 1982 he was appointed a Professor of History. He also served as Assistant Dean of the Faculty and as Acting Dean of the Faculty and Provost. Payne was Director of the Division of Social Sciences at Colgate when he accepted appointment as Professor of History and Provost at Haverford in 1985. He was named Acting President of Haverford last year.

The author or editor of four books and numerous articles on modern intellectual history, he has been the recipient of many academic awards and is a past president of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies.

In a morning interview with Payne, he answered questions about various issues surrounding the presidency. Payne stated that the President acts at the will of the board--there is no contract. "The average life span of a president is ten years, but I don't want to make any pre-judgements."

Payne's goals are general: to talk, listen, and learn. "Hamilton is strong in all areas. It wants to be stronger in all areas. There are no crises, but there are lots of dreams and hopes for residential life, curriculum, endowment, and fundraising. Hamilton's strengths allow it to think about new things."

Payne is excited about the enthusiasm for the school, displayed by all members of the community. He enjoys being totally involved in all aspects of the college.



photo/Vicky Doyle

New President Henry Payne standing by portrait of former president Samuel Adams.

Payne also discussed the politics of the college. "One of the important educational aspects of a small college is its politics. The College is a little village with its own parties, issues, and tensions. I consider that an education in civic consciousness."

Payne does not see himself as a mere representative of the Board of Trustees, but instead views his role in the administration as an intellectual, soical leader for the community. "In a sense, the administration's job is to lead the college, which is not always easy to do." A president must report to the Board four times a year primarily to ensure them that the college is not going in unproductive directions.

When questioned about what he can contriubute to the college, Payne responded, "I bring a broad experience in all areas. I've been involved in curricular development at both Colgate and Haverford." Payne has also been involved in residential life. He was chair of a committee on student life his last year at Colgate and is looking forward to becoming more involved in student issues.

Payne will be holding weekly press conferences with the students. He hopes to have the Dean of Students and Faculty join him. 'It's a time to educate the community to what I'm thinking about. It's also a time to learn what the students are concerned about. It's easy to get isolated, through no fault of your own. Suddenly you realize that you've been in your office for three days answering the phone. The weekly press conference draws you out."

Tenure

According to Payne, the number of highly qualified Ph.D.'s is decreasing which makes it difficult to obtain high quality professors. "We'll be looking at work conditions, pay, and research opportunities for retaining really fine faculty." Payne also expressed an interest in attracting more women and minority faculty members to Hamilton. "Everyone on all sides seems to be interested in diversifying the faculty. That's the first and in some ways the most important thing. When people adopt it as a value, it will be emphasized in search after search, which should result in reasonable success."

Minority student recruiting

Payne has been involved in minority recruiting at Haverford over the past few years. He believes that the most important aspect of successful recruiting is to make Hamilton an at-

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Harry C. Payne

Degrees
B.A., M.A., Yale University, 1969
Ph.D., History, Yale University, 1973

Academic Appointments
Graduate teaching assistant in European History and Philosophy of History, Yale University, 1969-1973
Instructor of History, Colgate University, 1973-1974
Assistant Professor of History, Colgate University, 1974-1978
Associate Professor of History, Colgate University, 1978-1982
Professor of History, Colgate University, 1982-1985
Professor of History, Haverford College, 1985--

Administrative Appointments
Colgate University
Acting Chair of History Department, Summer, Fall, 1979
Assistant Dean of the Faculty, February 1980-June 1980
Acting Dean of the Faculty and Provost, July 1980-January 1981, Summer 1982
Director of Division of Social Sciences, Summer 1981, Spring-Summer 1982 (acting); 1983-85

Haverford College
Provost, 1985--
Acting President, 1987-88
Academic Honors and Awards
Phi Beta Kappa, Fall 1967
Warren Memorial High Scholarship Prize for highest ranking B.A. candidate, Yale College, June 1969
Summa Cum Laude, June 1969
Andrew D. White Essay Prize in European History, Yale College, June 1969
Danforth Fellow, 1968-1973
Woodrow Wilson Fellow (honorary), 1968
National Endowment for the Humanities, Summer Stipend, 1975.
Annual article prize, 1975-76, form the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, for "Elite Versus Popular Mentality in the Eighteenth Century."
Overseas Fellow, Churchill College, Cambridge University, Lent and Easter Terms, 1977
Professor of University Studies, Colgate University, 1982-84.
President, American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, 1984-85

...Payne views campus issues

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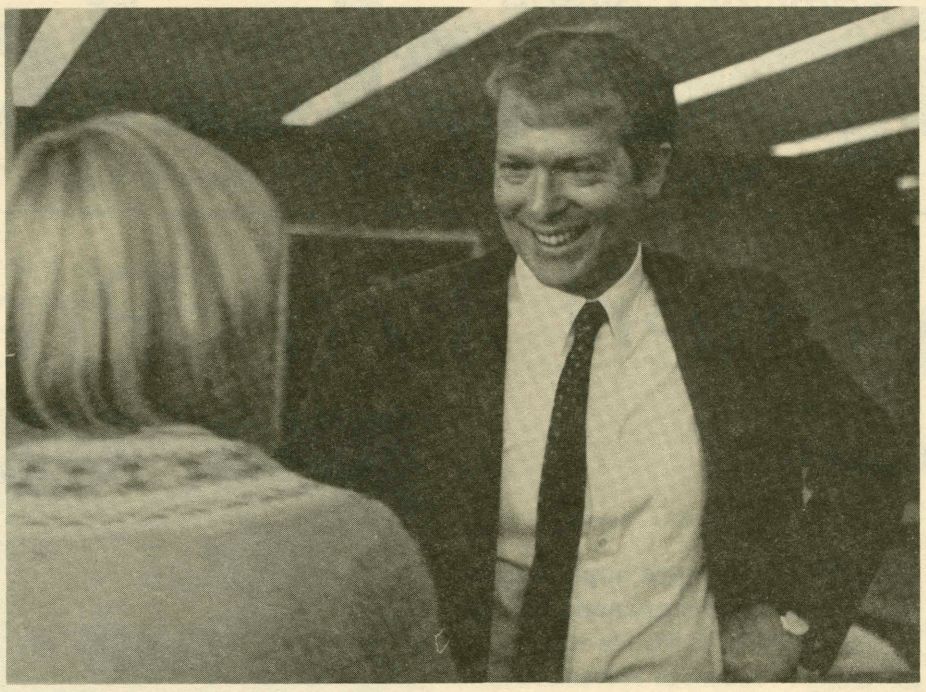
tractive place. "Minority students must feel welcome and there must be a good environment for them. It's important to evaluate this often because in the end the current minority students can help you recruit others." Payne added that it is not the simplest admissions process, but it is possible. He also asserted that minority recruitment is a theme he has heard from the faculty, students, and the Board.

Athletics

Payne is pleased with Hamilton's involvement in the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC). "It's just the right posture for a school like this. It's amateur athletics which are truly competitive. At the Division III level you don't encounter the deep tensions between athletic competition and academics." Payne added that having a strong athletics department is a positive influence in attracting high quality students.

Divestment

"The situation in South Africa is one which everyone deplores. The question is how best to respond. I want to get grounded here before I get involved in the local discussion."



photo/Vicky Doyle

Henry Payne meeting the community this morning.

Payne believes there are good, sound moral ways to reason about South Africa that lead to a decision to either divest or not to divest. Payne added that it is an internal debate that the community must resolve.

Curriculum

Overall, Payne believes there is room for more specific requirements at Hamilton. He is eager to join in the discussions at Hamilton regarding curriculum. "The main quest of Hamilton is to get smart students, intelligent faculty and good resources and to put them together for four years. That is about 90 percent of the battle. It is really the living together, talking, working, wrtiting, discussing, and experimenting in a learning community that is important." Payne has had good experiences with a core curriculum at Colgate. He favors a core curriculum organized around central questions which people explore together. It should also be broadly inter-disciplinary. "This requires a special faculty willing to take the necessary time to develop this type of curriculum. I really just believe in good, solid requirements that are intellectually justifiable."

Societies

Payne expressed his desire to become more familiar with the community before expressing views on local issues. He has been involved in two totally different residential situations. Colgate is oriented toward a strong society system while Haverford has none. "The basic guiding principle for the near future, according to the Board of Trustees, is that they are here. However, the same standards of health, safety, and decorum apply as in the student residences generally. There is no reason, in principle, why this cannot work and work well."

Payne will be moving to Hamilton in early July with his wife Debby and their two children Jonathan, age 12 and Samuel, age 9.

History of The Hamilton Presidency

by Kanchalee Svetvilas

From ministers to professors, Hamilton has been served by sixteen presidents. They have guided the College through financial troubles, increased its size and achieved the academic status it has today.

Azel Backus was named Hamilton's first president October 22, 1812. During his administration, 25 graduates in three classes received degrees from him. A commons hall and a new dormitory were built. A start had been made on leveling and landscaping the campus, and a sidewalk was constructed down the Hill to the Village. The general organization of the curriculum and discipline of the College was established.

The Rev. Henry Davis succeeded Backus in 1817. During his administration, the building program placed a financial strain on the College. In addition, Davis disagreed with the Board of Trustees on the direction the College should take. However, by the the end of his administration, "It was settled that Hamilton was to remain a college and not become a glorified high school; that its curriculum would remain fundamentally a classical liberal arts course," according to Walter Pilkington, author of Hamilton College 1812/1962. The College started to recover after these points were made.

Sereno E. Dwight, one-time chaplain of the United States Senate, pastor of the Park Street Church in Boston, and master of a proprietary boarding school in New Haven became the third president. He was primarily a fundraiser, and within a year of his presidency, he raised $50,000 in pledges. Dwight resigned when the Board of Trustees refused to move the college to Utica.

Joseph Penney and Simeon North, the fourth and fifth presidents of the College were also fundraisers. By the time North resigned, the endowment was nearly $100,000.

After North's tenure of 18 years, Samuel Ware Fisher was named president in 1858. He retained the position for eight years resigning in 1866. He made financial gains—the endowment of the college quadrupled and the number of students had risen from 125 to nearly 200.

Dr. Henry Darling's administration was marred by reports of favoritism towards his son. The Board of Trustees declared he was a poor administrator, his faculty relationship was weak and discipline was bad. However, he stayed on as president until he died in 1891.

Darling's successor, Melancthon Woolsey Stryker began an ambitious building program that gave the College facilities that were the envy of peer institutions. The curriculum was substantially revised to include modern languages and the sciences. Stryker also changed the school colors from pink to buff and blue of the Continental Army. Under his administration, the Hall of Science, Hall of Languages, Hall of Philosophy, Hall of Commons, the Chemistry Building and Carnegie Hall were built.

Under Stryker's successor, Frederick Carlos Ferry, Hamilton achieved solid academic status among America's leading liberal arts institutions. Ferry raised the entrance standards and increased enrollment. Hamilton gained a reputation as an outstanding premedical school. He increased the number of faculty to reduce the faculty-student ratio to one to eight. By the time he resigned Hamilton was pictured as a conservative, middle-class institution of high academic standing but with financial problems and only a 50 percent graduation rate.

William Carlos Ferry succeeded Ferry in 1917 and was determined to raise the admissions standards and diminish the attrition rate of graduates. Instead of relying on College Entrance Board scores or Regents examinations, the College required applicants to have completed secondary school course work in English, mathematics, foreign language, science and social studies. Candidates were to be examined individually. He reduced the student course load from five to four, abolished compulsory mathematics, required only one language instead of two, and improved instruction in English composition in 1940.

By the end of 1942, the College had changed since the draft reduced the number of students. The College decided to participate in the Civilian Pilot Training Program. Enrollment jumped to 870, and the College turned into a camp. Women, often the wives of faculty members appeared as teachers.

David Worcester's task as Cowley's successor was to steer the College through the postwar adjustment. The change called for additional faculty and in turn additional faculty housing. Married veterans had to be housed. After Worcester became ill, Thomaas Brown Rudd became president until a person could be found to fill the position on a long term basis.

On October 9, 1948, Robert Ward McEwen was named president. In a decade he was to complete the building program inaugarated under President Stryker and to increase Hamilton's academic standing.

Richard Watrous Couper became acting president from 1966-68 after McEwen resigned. John Wesley Chandler became the next president in 1968. During that same year, Samuel Fisher Babbitt became president of Kirkland College. Then in 1974, J. Martin Carovano became president and guided the College through the merger of Hamilton and Kirkland Colleges.

Information for this article was primarily drawn from Walter Pilkington's book, Hamilton College 1812/1962.